

# North Chicago VA News



VA Great Lakes  
Health Care System  
VISN 12

North Chicago  
VA Medical Center  
3001 Green Bay Road  
North Chicago, Illinois 60064

March 2005

## Black History Month



During Black History Month, we honor the rich heritage of African-Americans and pay tribute to their many contributions to our Nation. The National 2005 theme was, "The Niagara Movement: Black Protest Reborn, 1905-2005". Throughout the month of February, several activities were held here at the medical center in recognition of Black History Month. The kick-off began on February 1, followed by an art exhibit in the atrium of Bldg. 133 on February 7. Mr. Adell Crump (brother of employee Phyllis Crump) was the guest speaker at the program held on February 17. Mr. Crump is a

Package and Corporate Trademark Designer in one of the top 10 design firms in the U.S. Mr. Crump has created the designs for Total Cereal, Tone Soap Bars, Twix Candy Bar, Glade Air Freshener, Yoplait Yogurt, One-A-Day Vitamin, Betty Crocker Cake Mix – to name but a few. It was indeed an inspiration to listen to Mr. Crump relate how he achieved his success in the corporate world. Fashions were also modeled by our employees at the February 17th program. Black Youths of Tomorrow was the theme for celebration on February 25. This program featured Praise Dancers, Dominique Little and Cashmire McElrath, a recital of "What Black

History Means to Me" by Jazmin Jones, and a dance performance by The North Chicago High School SPIRIT Team.

The grand finale for the month of celebrations, was the "Little Taste of Soul" held in Bourke Hall on February 28. A special thanks are extended to Archie Wall, Chairman, and the members of the Black History Committee: Judith Rodgers, Phyllis Crump, Doris Freeman, Ernestine Holmon, Denise Lear, Brenda Jackson, Lee Flowers, Charles Mims, Consandra Caston, Shirley Hart, Teresa Adams, and Candious Sawyer.

*Fashions modeled by our employees*



## North Chicago News

*North Chicago News is published for staff and volunteers of the North Chicago VA Medical Center. Submissions can be sent to [douglas.shouse@med.va.gov](mailto:douglas.shouse@med.va.gov)*

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## ADR - What Is It?

ADR is the abbreviation for Alternative Dispute Resolution. The ADR mediation program is an informal mechanism to resolve workplace disputes more quickly and less formally than the traditional methods, such as complaints of discrimination, grievances, etc. Any employee may request use of this program for the purpose of resolving a workplace dispute. The dispute may be between an employee and their supervisor or another employee. Mediation is a confidential process where a neutral third party "mediator" assists, encourages, and facilitates the employees to find a mutually acceptable solution. Recently the medical

center hosted formal certified classroom ADR mediator training. Congratulations to our newly certified ADR mediators: Mary Collins-Henderson, Donna Jones, Steve Navarro, Bill Morton, Nancy Rivera, Mark Rosenblum, Dan Swichkow, Barbara Thomas, and Allan Wernick. For more information about the ADR program, contact Nancy Gember at ext. 83853.





## Director's Corner - On Being Proud to Care

North Chicago took on a promise to assure we are all, "Proud to Care." Having pride in ourselves and what we do, carries over to how productive and happy we are as individuals both in our personal lives as well as in the workplace. It is important to have pride and what better way to have this than by caring for those who have served this country. I feel there are few callings greater in life than to care and serve the men and woman of the armed services who have placed themselves in harms way for the good of all of us. Yes it is true we owe a great deal to the veterans who have protected this country and for those still standing watch today in Iraq, Afgan and many other places around the world. We can be proud that we are helping to repay that debt.

So as each of us do our job, take a moment to reflect back on what we are here for. It is one of the greatest honors that can be bestowed upon someone, "To care for him who has borne the battle and for his widow and his orphan."

I would like to personally thank each and every staff at North

Chicago. When I walk the halls and go to the patient units, I see the pride in your faces in what you are doing. I have worked at several VA's in my career and I can say without a doubt, North Chicago VA has the most caring and compassionate staff I have seen. Please take pride in this and what you are doing and realize you are making a difference every day in the work you do. Many times you might not know the job you are doing is helping so many. If you don't believe that, ask a veteran. Thanks again for taking on such a responsibility of caring for those who have served us.



## PACE Van Pool Success



Raymond Yong, Tariq Hassan, Bill Chagares and Bal Sharma are just four of the van poolers who have taken advantage of the PACE Program.

*Get 4 people who live in same area to ride together.*

*Use a PACE VEHICLE. PACE pays for gas, maintenance, tolls and insurance*

*VA transit voucher pays up to \$100/month of your costs to PACE.*

*Mileage - Round trip less than 50 miles = totally FREE RIDE.*

*Mileage - Round trip 51-60 miles, you pay \$4/month.*

*Mileage - Round trip 61-70 miles, you pay \$8/month.*

Sound like a GOOD DEAL? IT SURELY IS.

Curious? Contact Outreach and Marketing Program for more information at ext. 83267.

## New Chief Radiology



A new member has recently joined the North Chicago VA staff. Piyush Vyas, M.D. was appointed as the Chief, Imaging Service. Dr. Vyas is well known in the local community having been an Associate

Radiologist at both St. Therese Medical Center and Victory Hospital in Waukegan since 1974. He is an active member in numerous organizations: India Cultural Association, Foundation Board of Lake County Medical Society, Illinois Medical Society, American Medical Association, Radiological Society of North America. Dr. Vyas has served as President of the Lake County Medical Society in 2000 and as President of St. Therese Medical Center Staff in 1995. Planning and coordinating fundraisers for local charities is a true enjoyment for him. When his busy schedule allows a few free moments, he enjoys travel, tennis and reading. Dr. Vyas and his wife, Nan, have resided in Lake Forest for the past 30 years. They have three children: the oldest daughter, Neha graduated from the University of Chicago with an

MBA; their son, Hemal will graduate June 2005 from the University of Chicago with an MBA; and the youngest daughter, Sapna will graduate May 2005 from the University of Illinois-Champaign with a major in psychology. When asked what he considers as a major professional accomplishment, he proudly responds, "coming to work at this VA Medical Center." Dr. Vyas is overwhelmed by the friendly, warm and helpful staff. As to his personal accomplishments, he exclaims being married for 37 years and raising three wonderful children. We are excited to have Dr. Vyas join our staff. Welcome!



# VA Staff Help DoD Prepare for Returning Soldiers

It was good fortune that Captain Maria Bates of the Wuerzburg MEDDAC and Dr. Steven Silver a VA psychologist at the Coatesville VAMC met at a training session for therapists treating the psychological effects of trauma. Dr. Silver was teaching Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR), a method of psychotherapy listed in the recently published VA/DoD guidelines as an effective treatment for Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). Captain Bates, a social worker was part of the team preparing for the rotation of the 1st Infantry to their home base in Wuerzburg, Germany. Realizing that the treatment would provide a way to help returning soldiers and their families, Captain Bates discussed it with Dr. Silver and her Chief of Social Work, Lieutenant Colonel Gary Trynieszewski who heartily agreed. The training was arranged.

The result was another positive step of VA and DoD sharing resources and knowledge, this time in the form of a four day seminar in Wuerzburg for the psychotherapists. The training was conducted by Dr. Silver and Dr. Susan Rogers from the PTSD program at Coatesville VAMC, Dr. Jamie Zabukovec from the Prescott VAMC and Dr. Howard Lipke from the North Chicago VAMC, all experienced in

the course of his training and practice experience.

The Wuerzburg EMDR training is one of several conducted by members of this team, as well as with support from other VA and even private sector EMDR teachers, working through a not for profit organization called EMDR Humanitarian Assistance Programs (HAP). Training and on going consultation, which has been provided at Colorado Springs at the Army Community Hospital and the one in Bremerton, Washington are completed.

In discussing the training and the mental health situation for returning combatants, Dr. Lipke noted that the preliminary indication from research is that returning veterans from Iraq and Afgan, like veterans of other wars regardless of how well they have performed will sometimes have events stuck in their minds not as a memory of the past, but rather in a way that makes them sometimes feel as if the combat is still occurring. Dr. Lipke states, "The therapy that was taught in Germany has been demonstrated to be effective in helping many survivors of war and other trauma, mentally digest the events so that they are memories not flashbacks or repetitious nightmares." Dr. Lipke's goes on to say, "EMDR treatment as well as other counseling techniques can also help with the destructive anger and psychological numbness that often also accompany return from combat. Not everyone has these problems, different people have different responses. However, ironically enough, on the average for those who have them the strongest and longest, it appears to be because they take these painful experiences as signs of weakness, not a natural reaction to extreme stress." He concludes by saying, "Rather than deal with them through self acceptance, increased social support and counseling, they try to avoid the problem and make it go away by pretending they don't have it, and thereby keep it."

After returning from Germany, Dr. Lipke conducted a training session at the Great Lakes Naval Training Center for 12 counselors. Helping Dr. Lipke with the training were Dr. Sheilah Perrin and Dr. John Schout from NCVAMC and Dr. Edith Tabor and Jim Moore, MSW, both retired NCVAMC employees.

This is another example of how VA and DoD are collaborating to help both working active duty military and veterans.

Congratulations, to the entire VA group for stepping up when called upon!!!

## Federal Womens Scholarship Luncheon Held



The Federal Women's Program Scholarship Luncheon was held on Monday, March 7, 2005 to honor the recipient of this year's scholarship, Latoiya Futch. Ms. Futch is a pharmacy technician here.

The North Chicago VA Federal Women's Program (FWP) supports the career development and advancement of all women and men at North Chicago VAMC. Scholarship funds are raised throughout the year through bake sales and other fund raising activities. For more information contact Magylyn Ortiz, FWP Chairperson.

Congratulations are extended to Latoiya Futch!!

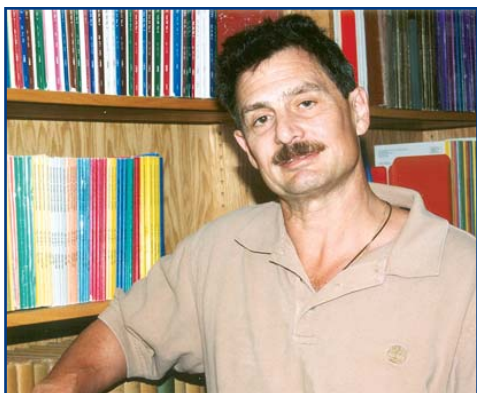
## Challenging Times Lie Ahead

This year's budget is challenging. A hiring freeze has been implemented except for critical direct patient care positions or critical positions in support of patient care. A reduction in force is not being planned. FTEE reductions will be met by delaying or deferring new hiring. Other initiatives being explored are reducing and/or closely monitoring: the usage of overtime, fund control points, pharmacy expenditures, purchases and inventory management. Also funds for travel, equipment and construction accounts are being converted to help cover budget deficit.

Program areas are addressing cost savings initiatives and are exploring ways to become as efficient as possible. The time is now to be creative and explore new ways how services are being offered. If you have ideas on this, please share them with your supervisor.

Initial indications are that the fiscal year 2006 budget will also be challenging. On a positive note, this budget deficit requires us to become more creative and explore other possibilities that we might not have done. This will assure our organization will be strong in the future as we move forward providing quality health care to our patients.

This facility has had challenging budget years in the past and working together, we will successfully address this year's challenges. As more information becomes available it will be shared with all staff.



PTSD treatment and in EMDR training. The VA staff flew to Germany on Monday, December 27th and returned on New Years Eve. The VA group worked with 30 Army and DoD therapists preparing for their combat forces return from Iraq. According to Dr. Lipke, the training team agreed that the Army/DoD therapists were as an adept and highly motivated group as they had ever worked with.

As part of the program, participants worked with each other in small groups under supervision of the staff and used their own past experiences as targets for training with this method. So the therapists are learning by being both the therapist and client role for each other. One of the extra benefits of the training was that one of the therapists worked on a traumatic experience from his deployment in the war zone. He gained insight, and found that event less disturbing during





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# National Salute To Hospitalized Veterans



Dick Hyde, Mayor of Waukegan, visits Veteran, Bill Burfield as part of the National Salute To Hospitalized Veterans.

National Salute to Hospitalized Veterans Week was celebrated at the North Chicago VA Medical Center during the week of February 13-19 with the help of staff, volunteers and visitors. Perfectly timed to coincide with Valentine's Day, the same sentiments of caring and sharing match the salute's purpose of expressing honor and appreciation to our veterans. Throughout the week, over 2,500 valentines, cards and letters poured in from classroom students, newspaper readers and others thanks to the initiative started by columnist, Ann Landers and "Valentines for Vets". Local schools and scout groups visited patient wards to personally hand out valentines and treats. The Girl Scouts from Great Lakes, Ingelside, and Lake Forest sponsored Bingos for our veterans as did the Brownies from Lake Forest (pictured). The students from Waukegan East Middle School (pictured) distributed valentine candy and homemade cards to our veterans in Bldg. 134. Mayor Dick Hyde of Waukegan, Admiral Gary Jones, and Navy Chief of Staff Mary Kolar visited various wards to personally thank each vet for what they did for our country. Pizza parties were sponsored on all of the wards by Community Affairs and by the VA Voluntary Service volunteers. The "Barefoot Hawaiian" and the NA Kapuna Ukulele Club of Chicago

(pictured) entertained our veterans with Hawaiian dancing and singing. Several members of this unit were in the 442nd Regional Combat Army Unit in Italy during World War II. They were the most highly decorated unit of its size.



Many groups visited our veterans during the Salute including from top: Lake Forest Brownie Troop, Hawaiian Dancers and singers, and Waukegan East Middle school.



## Boy Scouts and Cub Scouts Earn Badge

The Boy Scouts and Cub Scouts from Mundelein toured our Medical Center recently to earn their Government badge. Marge Ferraresi gave a very informative tour of the Rehab-Medicine Clinic demonstrating and explaining all of the different equipment and how they assist our veterans on their road to recovery. Mr. Sullivan, Medical Center Director met with the group and talked about government, veterans, and all of the various services offered here at the North Chicago VA.

